

DIVINITY.

THE GOOD OLD WAY:

A SERMON.

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JER. vi. 16.

"THUS saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

WHEN these words were addressed to the Jews, they had shamefully departed from the holy paths of their pious ancestors, and were in danger of perishing by the hands of their enemies. In that awfully degraded state, they found no rest for their souls. But the Lord, who is gracious and merciful to the vilest offenders, urged them to "ask for the old paths," "the good way," and to "walk therein." Had they obeyed his voice, they would have escaped from impending ruin, and their souls would have been restored to a state of peace and rest; but in the obstinacy and obduracy of their hearts, they said, "We will not." All men who wander from the good old way are exposed, like those apostate Jews, to imminent danger, and their unhappy spirits are "like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest;" but if they hearken to the voice of the Lord, and return to him with humble and contrite hearts, they will find safety and comfort. But let them "ask for the old paths," and "the good way;" for genuine religion, like its Divine Author, is the same in all ages. There never was, nor can there ever be, any other religion than that of inward and outward holiness; and the paths which lead to it, are the same in substance now, that they were in the days of old. Holiness was the religion of Paradise; it is the religion of the church militant; and it will be the religion of the church triumphant. There may be new sects, new creeds, and new modes of worship; but there cannot be a new religion; because God, who is absolutely perfect, is the same from everlasting to everlasting; and with him there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (Psalm xc. 1, James i. 17.) The Roman Catholics, who glory in the antiquity of their Church, have adopted new creeds, and new modes of worship; but all sound Protestants, though but of yesterday as a distinct body of Christians, have ever sought the old paths of truth and purity. By following their example, we shall find the ancient religion of the patriarchs and prophets, of Christ and his apostles; and this will stand when all the errors and novel inventions of men, in the worship and service of God, have been chased away by the light of divine truth.

The passage of Scripture which we have selected as a text, was "written